

# 'Lost' Waste Dump Turns Up

By Al Watts

The "lost" hazardous materials dump in South Seattle was found yesterday, officials reported.

The dump, holding 200 tons of rock-like chemical wastes, is at 8801 E. Marginal Way S. on property owned by the Kenworth Truck Co., according to Bob Jacobson, Environmental Protection Agency spokesman. It is paved over and fenced.

The waste materials, consisting of sodium and calcium carbonates and various trace metals such as copper and zinc, were dumped by the Monsanto Co. "sometime in the 1950s," said Tom McGann, manager of the chemical firm's plant that lies adjacent to Kenworth.

Monsanto formerly owned the waste site.

"We believe the material is very harmless and feel it is unfortunate that a report came out hinting that something dangerous was buried at some forgotten spot," McGann said. He said the dump was never lost as far as the firm was concerned.

A U.S. House investiga-

tive subcommittee last Friday listed the "unknown" Seattle site among 3,383 waste disposal locations, 1,099 of which have been abandoned.

The nation's 53 largest chemical companies were asked by the House Commerce subcommittee to report on such dump sites which contain a total of 762 million tons of wastes. Some of the abandoned sites could present "imminent hazard," according to the subcommittee report.

"This site shouldn't present any problems," Jacobson said. "One of the EPA's inspectors went out to check the site and from his eyeball inspection it looks safe. It is paved and fenced and properly storm-drained."

Jacobson said the material as described by McGann of Monsanto is "rock-like and not readily soluble in water."

McGann said the material is scale — "not too unlike what you find inside home water heaters" — from containers used in the

manufacture of "Vanillin."

The chemical is used as an artificial vanilla flavoring and in some drugs. Vanillin is the only product made at the Monsanto plant here, McGann said.

For some unknown reason, the scale hasn't developed at the Monsanto plant for more than a year. If it does recur, "we'll dispose of it in a landfill somewhere. Presently we take such materials to a fill in Arlington, Ore.," McGann said.

McGann said when the site was reported to the House subcommittee, "we gave them the address and the complete property description. I don't know how it came up as 'lost' in their report."

Jacobson said the EPA will continue to check out the site and will confer with Monsanto on its disposal practices.

Acting Seattle Fire Marshal Bobby Lee Hansen said he received a report on the dump site. "It doesn't sound too exciting," he remarked.

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